



WEEKLY RECAP

UPPER SCHOOL
11/11/19-11/15/19

GARDENING & ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

MS. MIKAEL, DR. J.

Our youngest chicks are growing quickly. Their wing feathers have come in and the chicks are enjoying short bursts of flight. They play, peck, pee/poop all day long! They are inseparable and will cry for one another if they are apart by more than 6 inches. The older hens are growing large, Dandelion is still much smaller than Amelia but both are eager to strut around the schoolyard in search of insects and adventure. The rabbits enjoy peeking out of their enclosures, trying to gain enough courage to jump out on their own. It will be such a pleasure for the animals and their humans once we have a walk-in, ground-level enclosure built for the rabbits to explore and hop with greater freedom. When you are able, please continue to send in your extra fresh veggies for our farm animals' meals.

TEACHING HARD HISTORY: THE LEGACY OF ENSLAVED AFRICANS

MS. ANGELA

MS. DENISE, MR. KRIS - BARTON PHONEMIC AWARENESS SMALL GROUPS
LITERACY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

How can we, as anthropologists, learn about the rich cultural history of enslaved Africans and the lasting legacy of slavery in Florida?

To say the students knocked it out of the park during their presentations is an understatement. They had spent hours preparing for their presentations by writing formal essays and then practicing reading them. Students had also taken a lot of time preparing visual aids. While many of the students were nervous, they took their presentations seriously and acted as professionals. They should all be proud of their hard work and dedication! Students also wrote creative stories this week and provided written feedback on what they enjoyed their second term and what they felt could be improved.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS: FRIEND OR FOE?

MS. SAVANNAH

MS. DENISE, MR. KRIS - BARTON PHONEMIC AWARENESS SMALL GROUPS
LITERACY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

How can we, as lawyers, analyze the impact of the Age of Exploration on native communities by placing Christopher Columbus on trial?

This week, the students showed their knowledge of Columbus, the Columbian Exchange and the Age of Exploration, by putting Christopher Columbus on trial. Ultimately, Columbus was found guilty of his crimes against humanity and negatively impacting native communities. The students also reflected on their work and the course in general, and gave team feedback to their peers.

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD

MS. ANGELA

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

How can we, as agriculturalists, apply our knowledge of math and science to both gardening and cooking?

This week students had the special treat of a visit to the Barrier Island Sanctuary where they learned about which sea turtles nest in the Archie Carr Refuge. Their prior knowledge about sea turtles was demonstrated as they shared what they knew with the specialist, Ms. Celeste. Students also participated in a scavenger hunt which made them familiar with the many facts on display at the Sanctuary. They also got to meet and pet “Cheeseburger,” a beautiful diamondback terrapin. In math, students continued to work on building upon their foundational math skills this week and received one-on-one instruction to ensure they have a solid understanding of the concepts they are currently working on. I still strongly encourage families to play multiplication games with students at home in an effort to increase their math fluency. This will allow them to see progress more quickly, especially in the area of division.

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD

MATHEMATICS

DR. J

How can we as budding agricultural scientists apply our knowledge of math to support and harvest a bountiful garden of delicious, edible foods?

Students were excited to develop their own made-from-scratch, garden-fresh, artisan pizzas this week. Students applied skills of measuring, converting units of measure, ratios, proportions, fractions and arithmetic to develop and scale their unique recipes for individual servings. Students were required to harvest and use 3 ingredients grown in our pizza garden and schoolyard gardens in both the dough and the sauce recipes. In this “episode of Chopped Kitchen”, we were looking for a truly unique and delicious pizza and sauce to bring to market that represents the Verdi Ecoschool. Culinary Judges Ayana and John had a difficult decision; all of the pizzas were AMAZING! There were several savory pizzas and two dessert pizza entries. Ultimately the judges chose Christian’s Basil, Oregano and Parsley, 3 cheese, bacon creation as the first place winner of this round of “Chopped”. Stay tuned for more exciting episodes of VES Kids in the Kitchen! Check out some of the photos from our cooking adventures posted on brightwheel.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST 2

SCIENCE

DR. J

How can we, as scientists, understand the anatomy and physiology of the human body?

As we continue to study the human body in depth, we are learning about anatomy, physiology and adaptations for survival from animal models. This week, we took a field trip to the Barrier Island Center (aka Sanctuary) to study squid anatomy and identify homologous structures in the human body. We were able to identify and examine the respiratory system, reproductive system, digestive system and locomotive/muscular system. We searched for the nervous and cardiac structures, but they were difficult to identify in these small specimens. We were able to isolate the backbone-like structure called the pen, an internal support structure made of chitin, an evolutionary remnant of an external shell. We examined the adaptations for prey capture (tentacles and toothed-suction cups!). We learned some surprising facts including that squid chromatophores on the skin can continue to function many hours (or more) after squid death. We were able to activate the chromatophores to change color by pressure

and friction. The chromatophores play an important role in squid communication and survival, helping the animals to camouflage themselves, attract mates or otherwise communicate with other organisms. Another adaptation for defense that we were able to isolate was the ink sac. We honored and respected the squid's contribution to our learning goals by immortalizing their images using a traditional Japanese art form called "Gyotaku", a type of fish painting that was used in historic times (mid-1800s) to document fish catch before the advent of cameras and other imaging techniques. Furthermore, we saved our squid for composting to return their nutrients to the earth and support plant life.

CHOICE: PE

MR. KRIS

How can we, as athletes, stay fit and develop team cooperation through physical activities?

Due to the holiday and planned field trip, PE was cancelled for the week.

CHOICE: STUDENT GOVERNMENT

MS. SAVANNAH

How can we, as a class government, create a system that allows students to have direct oversight, input and voice into the school community decision making process?

This week, students worked to plan our very first student-led event for the Upper School. Details coming soon!

CHOICE: MARKET GARDEN BUILD TEAM

MR. KRIS

How can we, as engineers and contractors, design and build the infrastructure systems our school's Market Garden needs to thrive?

Due to the holiday and planned field trip, we only had one class for our market build class this week. The class time that we did have was spent polishing fine details on our creations and reflecting/assessing the work we had completed through the term.

CHOICE: MARKET GARDEN GROW TEAM

MS. MIKAEL

How can we, as permaculturists, develop our school's Market Garden to grow food using sustainable practices?

This week students worked with Mr. Josh as Ms. Mikael was away. They summed up their experiences working in the market garden completing consciously designed plantings that enhance the gardens resilience. Afterwards they planted papayas at market garden entrances. Then students were given an overview of permaculture by Joshua and his experiences working in the field.

CHOICE: PRIDE OF PLACE

DR. J, MS. SAVANNAH

How can we as community members effectively and joyfully enhance our learning environment and demonstrate care and compassion for all living things?

Students attended to the needs of our schoolyard by watering plants, using green plants as compost in the market garden (chop and drop), spreading hay as cover and a weed block, creating a concrete pathway near the backdoor of 1861 to reduce dirt and debris inside the schoolhouse and of course, feeding, watering and caring for our rabbits and hens. All of our beautiful plants provide food for various insects and organisms which in turn feed the web of life. We were delighted to observe sparkly, metallic green-blue orchid bees pollinating our passion flowers! Another frequent visitor to the schoolyard are members of our local squirrel population, observed enjoying our multitude of pumpkin seedlings.

CHOICE: ART MORE PLACE

MS. CAROL

What a great four weeks with all your talented students. Our last week was acrylic painting as well as oil pastel on black paper to celebrate Thanksgiving. Everyone did such a good job. They are great kids and I'll miss them.

BRAIN SCIENCE

MS. SYDNEY

Due to the holiday and planned field trip, brain science was cancelled for the week.